



COMIO Status Report September 2016

Investigate, Identify, and Promote Cost Effective Strategies and Best Practices to Prevent the Incarceration of Youth and Adults with Mental Illness

The 2016 Legislative Report will focus on the following areas:

Theme: Tackling Stigma-Based Policies and Practices – *How Myths and Misperceptions Reinforce the Marginalized Status of Justice Involved Individuals with Mental Illness – Perpetuated by Systems, Communities, and Individuals*

Diversion

- Investigate strategies to develop the service and housing capacity to keep individuals from incarceration, including effective re-entry as an opportunity to prevent recidivism.
- Identify the unique additional needs of the justice involved - addressing needed behavioral health issues but also risk factors of recidivism. Identify how existing federal, state, and local policies can be interpreted to provide the least harmful impact (unintended or intended) on the justice-involved living with mental health challenges (e.g. ban the box initiatives, suspending restrictions on eligibility for housing subsidies).
- Promote examples of exemplary and solution-oriented efforts.

Training

- Investigate ways to support officer mental health with tools and tailored support.
- Identify opportunities for access to crisis intervention training, recognizing that training is only part of a needed culture/policy shift. Identify emerging needs and solutions to enhance competencies for community corrections because there are more individuals with serious mental illness in these settings today.
- Promote best practices in crisis response, de-escalation, and communications skills.

Juvenile Justice

- Investigate how the local population in custody, or at risk of it, is changing and what can be done to address their mental health needs prior to custody and upon reentry.
- Identify effective strategies for youth with mental health needs who either are, or are at risk of, being justice-involved in the wake of significant reforms taking place in the foster care system. It is imperative that we ensure that youth with serious emotional and mental health needs get specialized services to prevent incarceration.
- Promote effective services for high risk probation youth with mental health needs.

New Project with the Department of Health Care Services Commencing Fall 2016

COMIO will be looking at patterns of health care service utilization among former offenders who are released from CDCR now that they are eligible for services such as mental health and substance use as part of implementing the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The goal is to capture health care utilization, especially since a substantial number have significant behavioral and physical health care needs. We anticipate that this data can assist counties in their planning for those who are interested in targeting services for former offenders who are Medi-Cal “super-utilizers” through expanded opportunities, such as the implementation of the Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System and pilot efforts like Whole Person Care and Community Behavioral Health Clinics. The first report will be due June 2017.